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METC: Training the Future of Military Medicine

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By Rear Adm. Bill Roberts, Medical Corps, U.S. Navy, commandant, [Medical Education and Training Campus](#)



When I first arrived at the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC) in San Antonio, Texas as the second commandant to ever hold the position, I knew the METC team had the unique opportunity to take the campus even further forward, and into the annals of history.

As the world's largest enlisted medical school house and the largest consolidation of military training in the Department of Defense history, that is a tall order to fill! But with highly dedicated and talented staff and instructors, METC continues to move forward and onward in our mission to train the finest medics, corpsmen, and techs, supporting our nation's ability to engage globally.

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Navy Medicine is a global healthcare network of 63,000 Navy medical personnel around the world who provide high quality health care to more than one million eligible beneficiaries. Navy Medicine personnel deploy with Sailors and Marines worldwide, providing critical mission support aboard ship, in the air, under the sea and on the battlefield.

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Originally directed by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission to co-locate the majority of DoD's enlisted medical training to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, METC soon began integrating its training programs.

Fully operational since September 2011, METC graduates roughly 20,000 Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard students annually from one of the more than 50 entry-level and advanced medical career programs.



Army, Coast Guard, Navy, and Air Force students in the Pharmacy Technician program at the Medical Education and Training Campus conduct training in the outpatient laboratory. (Photo by Dewite Wehrman)

METC conducts combined entry-level training for Navy hospital corpsmen and Air Force medical technicians, as well as service-specific, entry-level training for Army combat medics, or 68Ws. A large number of advanced enlisted medical careers is also taught at METC. Students come to METC to become anything from radiographic technicians and dental assistants, to nuclear medicine and surgical technicians.

Today, more than half of the programs taught at METC are consolidated, with either two or more services sharing curriculum for at least part of the

training cycle. The curriculum utilizes the best practices established by the tri-service components, so students benefit from the combined expertise.

In addition to providing quality education and training, METC is also working with accreditation agencies to ensure METC graduates can earn transferable college credits for most career fields; this will not only expedite the students' ability to earn a college degree, but will also prepare graduates for a possible future in the civilian allied health field, as well as maintain qualifications for reservists who work in the same career field as a civilian.

This critical initiative is in full alliance with the president's mandate to lower the rate of unemployment among our veterans and create job opportunities for them, and goes directly to the quality of service of our men and women in uniform.

But that's not all.

Students have access to state-of-the-art learning technologies and online tools, such as e-books, Blackboard learning platforms and mobile learning applications; there are notebook computers in nearly all the classrooms. Simulation technology used at METC ranges from high-technology/high-fidelity mannequins to task trainers, as well as computer-based simulation software. How simulation is used, and to what level, is determined by the curriculum and learning objectives.

My vision for the future is to see METC become even more interservice and,



Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Stephen Lollis, an instructor for Basic Course 102 in the Biomedical Equipment Technician program at the Medical Education and Training Campus, explains

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indeed, joint. The military has already become interoperable in our delivery of care: Army medics, Navy corpsmen, and Air Force medical technicians work side by side in military medical centers, in field hospitals, and on hospital ships. It is only natural, then, that the enlisted medical training environment should mirror the delivery of health services environment. We must "train as we fight".

complex electronics principles to Army, Navy, and Air Force BMET trainees during a lecture.

(Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Faaruwq Muhammad)

July 2011 (10)

The most important thing to remember as METC moves onward in our mission, however, is our people – they are the future of military medicine!

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